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ABSTRACT

This monograph concerns two problems that arise persistently at the Track Committee of the Florida Athletic Coaches Association annual meeting: (a) types of relays--with many coaches favoring distance events while others prefer sprint events, leaving the problem of agreeing on the balance to be reached between these two types of events, and (b) limitations of participants--with divergent opinions regarding how many and in what types of events a high school athlete can participate within a prescribed period of time without danger of muscle strain or other undue stress. To facilitate the committee's making recommendations relative to these problems, a survey was taken of the high school Activities Association Directors of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. A statistical interpretation of the results is presented, although no position is taken on either issue. Some of the general findings include the following: (a) the most popular relay run is the mile relay; (b) the 880 is run by 42 states; (c) the 440 is run by 24 states; (d) the average number of relays run is 2.6 per state; and (e) the total number of events in which an athlete may participate ranges from two to unlimited. Other findings and exceptions to the above are cited. (JCW)

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SURVEY OF THE STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATIONS RELATIVE TO TWO PROBLEMS IN HIGH SCHOOL TRACK

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July, 1973

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A SURVEY OF THE STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATIONS RELATIVE TO TWO PROBLEMS IN HIGH SCHOOL TRACK

Introduction

The Track Committee of the Florida Athletic Coaches Association meets each year to consider recommendations for the purpose of strengthening the track program in the State. Most of the recommendations have been in response to practical problems encountered by coaches throughout the track season. Some recommendations come from individuals or small groups of coaches who feel they have a particular insight into a problem to which a solution may not be readily recognized by all coaches. Some recommendations are the result of beliefs coaches hold relative to the athlete or to the sport. Regardless of the source or motivation of the recommendations, all are carefully scrutinized by the State Committee. Discussion is frequently heated and prolonged. Supporting evidence is presented in a variety of ways, but decisions are usually based on beliefs or philosophical views derived from the knowledge and experience of members of the committee. All supporting evidence is important in helping committee members make valid and reliable decisions. The important factor to note is that recommendations are thoroughly discussed before voting.

After a vote is taken by the Track Committee, the recommendations are brought to the floor of a general meeting of track coaches for consideration. Recommendations approved by this group are then forwarded to the Board of Directors of the Florida High School Activities Association for their consideration.

Two Persistent Problems

Two problems recur almost every year in one form or another. These are the number and types of relays run in track meets in Florida and the limitations of participation of athletes.

Types of Relays

Many coaches favor distance relays while others prefer sprint relays, just as many coaches emphasize distance events, while others emphasize sprint events. A compromise may be found in balancing sprint and distance relays relative to the other 13 events in Florida track meets. Then, of course, agreement must be reached upon a definition of balance among events.

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Limitations of Participation

Coaches may take several positions relative to limitation of participation by individuals. In how many and in what types of events can a high school athlete participate within a prescribed period of time without danger of muscle strain or other undue stress upon the physiological functions of the body? Both coaches and physiologists hold widely divergent opinions regarding this question. Many suggest that certain high school athletes can safely and successfully compete in more events than other athletes. For instance, not all can take a Decathlon, skill not withstanding, and yet, the rule for any one track athlete must apply to all. An additional consideration supporting limitation of individual participation is that limitation increases the numbers who participate in making up a complete track team.

Survey of Fifty-one High School Activities Directors

In an attempt to give the Florida Committee some factual information upon which to make recommendations relative to these two problems, the high school Activities Association Directors of the fifty states and the District of Columbia were surveyed. A copy of the survey questions is attached. (See Appendix II)

No position is taken here on either of the two issues. The statistical facts are merely presented for consideration. As the data is considered it is hoped that decisions will not be made solely on the assumption that if a majority of states take one position, so then should all.

Relays Run in the States

The most popular relay run among the fifty states and the District of Columbia is the mile relay, run by forty-six of the respondents. Forty-two states run the 880, although Virginia allows only two of the three classifications to run the event. The 440 is run by twenty-four states, although Rhode Island does not count this event in the scoring.

Nine states run the two mile relay, although Wyoming allows only Class AA to participate in this event. Ten states run the mile sprint medley (220, 220, 440, 880); however, in Vermont the medley is an extra event at the state meet for men who fail to qualify for the regular events including the 880 relay. Florida is the only state which runs the sprint medley in legs of 110, 220, 330 and 440. While only New York and the District of Columbia run the distance medley (880, 440, 440, mile).

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The average number of relays run is 2.6 per state. Five run only one relay. Twenty run two; seventeen run three; seven run four; and Iowa and the District of Columbia run five. (See chart page 4).

Limitation of Participation

A summary of limitation of participation in track is much more difficult to accomplish. Total number of events in which an athlete may participate range from two to unlimited; that is, a participant may enter every event in the meet. Participation in running events range from two through all, with limitations of distances and a variety of exceptions and variations noted in almost every state. Maximum number of field events range from two to every one, again with exceptions and combinations with running events noted in several states.

In spite of the great variations shown and many exceptions noted among the states, certain summarizations are made which may be helpful.

Total events allowed by each state

The total number of events a contestant may enter follows:

Two states, Arkansas and Hawaii, have no event or distance limitations.

Virginia allows entry in three running and all field events for a total of nine events.

Wyoming allows entry in four running and all field events for a total of nine events (assumed).

Seven states allow entry in five events.

Twenty-five states allow entry in four events.

Fourteen states allow entry in three events.

New York allows entry in only two events.

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SUMMARY OF RELAY PARTICIPATION

State	440	880	mile	two mile	(220,220 440,880) Sprint Medley	(880,440 440,mile) Distance Medley	TOTAL
Alabama	x		x				2
Alaska		x	x		x		3
Arizona	x		x				2
Arkansas	x	x	x				3
California	x		x				2
Colorado		x	x				2
Connecticut		x	x				2
Delaware	x	x	x	x			4
District of Col.	x	x	x		x	x	5
Florida		x	x		x[a]		3
Georgia	x		x				2
Hawaii		x	x				2
Idaho	x	x	x		x		4
Illinois		x	x				2
Indiana		x	x				2
Iowa	x	x	x	x	x		5
Kansas		x	x				2
Kentucky		x	x				2
Louisiana	x	x	x				3
Maine		x					1
Maryland	x	x	x				3
Massachusetts		x					1
Michigan	x	x	x				3
Minnesota		x	x		x		3
Mississippi	x	x	x				3
Missouri		x	x	x			3
Montana		x	x				2
Nebraska		x	x	x			3
Nevada	x	x	x				3
New Hampshire		x					1
New Jersey			x				1
New Mexico	x	x	x		x		4
New York		x	x	x		x	4
North Carolina		x	x				2
North Dakota	x	x	x				3
Ohio		x	x				2
Oklahoma	x		x				2
Oregon	x		x				2
Pennsylvania	x	x	x	x			4
Rhode Island	x[b]						1
South Carolina	x	x	x				3
South Dakota		x	x	x	x		4
Tennessee	x	x	x	x			4
Texas	x		x				2
Utah		x	x		x		3
Vermont		x			x[c]		2
Virginia		x[d]	x				2
Washington		x	x				2
West Virginia	x	x	x				3
Wisconsin		x	x				2
Wyoming		x	x	x[e]			3
TOTALS	24	42	46	9	11	2	134

a. 110, 220, 330, 440 b. Does not count in scoring c. For men who fail to qualify for reg. event
d. Class A and AA only e. Class AA only

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Running events allowed

The total number of running events a contestant may enter follows.

Arkansas and Hawaii have no limitation.

Montana allows five events.

Eighteen states allow four events.

Twenty-two states allow three events.

Seven states allow two events.

Field events allowed

The total number of field events a contestant may enter follows.

Four states allow all field events.

Florida and Montana allow five events.

Nineteen states allow four events.

Twenty states allow three events.

Six states allow two events.

As indicated, the limitations, variations, and exclusive conditions found among the fifty-one Associations are so diverse that a written summary would almost take the form of a presentation of the rules for each individual state. As a consequence of this dilemma, a summarization has been attempted in chart form. (See page 7).

An explanation of the chart follows. Column one, of course, lists the states in alphabetical order. Columns 2-5 present the total number of events in which a contestant may participate. Exceptions are noted. Columns 6-9 present the total number of running events in which a participant may engage. Columns 10-13 present the total number of field events in which a participant may participate. Columns 15-23 summarizes limitations placed upon running events. An attempt was made to categorize as much as possible; however, many additional notations (contained in column 14) reflect the regulations practiced in each state. Column 24, specific exclusions, presents limitations practiced only by the state indicated.

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Thirty-eight states have regulations relating to the distances a contestant may run which limit the type and/or number of running events in which a contestant may participate. Eleven states have event but not distance requirements with two of these qualified.

Some examples of readings from the chart are offered to clarify further. Florida allows each contestant to participate in five total events, only three of which may be running, although a contestant may be in all five field events. Any combination of running and field which does not violate these two rules are allowed except as shown in column 16. In Florida, a runner may run only two races of 220 yards or more; however, as shown in column eight, a participant may run in three races: therefore, a third race with a distance of less than 220 yards as well as participation in two field events is allowed.

Comparing with Alabama: a contestant may participate in a total of five events, four of which may be running and four field or combinations. A runner may run in two events of 880 and up except the two mile, in which case a runner may not compete in another track event. In the sense that runners may run in as many as four races of 880 and less, Alabama's running events rules are more liberal than Florida's. On the other hand, in the sense that a Florida runner may run in the two mile, the mile, and a race of less than 220 yards, whereas an Alabama runner is limited when running the two mile, Florida's rules are more liberal than Alabama's.

Since the survey form is not all inclusive, there may be errors of omission or interpretation of the rules in summarizing. As with most data, there is also the possibility that typographical errors may have occurred in the transfer of data from survey form to chart form. Any question for further clarification of these and other high school track and field regulations should be directed to the executive director of any state in which one has a particular interest.

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EVENTS AND LIMITATIONS OF PARTICIPATION

State	Total Number Events Track & Field				Maximum Track Events incl. Relays				Maximum Field Events				ATHLETE MAY RUN IN ONLY: two at 880 and up	one at 880 and up, two at 440 and up	one at 440 and up, two at 220 and up	one at 220 and up	if ind. two mile: then no other	then one other event but not distance limit spec. excl.
	5	4	3	2	5	4	3	2	5	4	3	2						
Alabama	X					X				X							X	X
Alaska		X				X				X							X	X
Arizona		X				X				X					1			
Arkansas		NO EVENT OR DIST. LIMIT																
Calif.		X				X					X							X
Colo.		X					X			X				X				
Conn.			X				X				X					X		
Delaware			X				X				X						2	
D. C.		X				X				X								X
Florida	X						X		X					X				
Georgia	X					X					X							3
Hawaii		NO EVENT OR DIST LIMIT																
Idaho		X					X				X				X			
Illinois			X					X				X			X			a
Indiana			X				X				X					X		
Iowa		X					X			X					X		4	
Kansas		X				X					X				X			
Kentucky		X				X				X						X		
La.		X				X				X								X
Maine	X						X					X						X
Maryland		X					X				X				5		X	
Mass.			X					X				X		1				
Mich.		X					X			X						X		6
Minn.		X					X				X			7				
Miss.	b						X				X							X b
Missouri		X				X				X							8	
Montana	X				X				X							1		
Nebraska		X				X				X								X
Nevada		X				X				X							X	
New Hmp.			X					X			X					9		
N. J.			X					X			X					1		
New Mex.	X					X				X							1	c
New York				X				X				X		X				d
N. Caro.		X					X			X						X	X	
N. Dakota		X				X				X							1	e
Ohio		X					X				X					5	10	
Oklahoma		X				X				X					X			
Oregon		X				X				X								X
Penn.			X				X				X						11	
Rh. Is.			X					X				X		X				
S. Caro.			X				X				X							f
S. Dakota		X				X				X								X
Tenn.			X				X				X					5		
Texas	X						X					X			12			
Utah		X					X				X					X		
Vermont			X				X				X							X
Virginia	13						X		13							5		
Wash.		X				X				X								X
West Va.		X					X				X						X	
Wis.			X					X				X						
Wyoming	13					X			13						7			

Explanations

1. no other track ev.
2. limited to 2 field events
3. may run only 2 ind. tr. evt.
4. not to exceed 880
5. + 1 other tr. ev.
6. less than 880
7. also 440 or less Relay leg
8. no other "distance" race
9. other event must be 88 relay leg
10. one other fld. ev.
11. no other tr. or fld
12. excld. relays
13. may enter all fld. ev.

SPECIFIC EXCLUSIONS

a. one more event reg. season
b. 3 ind. & all team
c. any 4 of 220 or less
   any 3 of 440 or less
d. experimental rule allows any 2 ev.
e. diff. for 2 day meet
f. not both 1&2 mile

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Appendix I
LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATIONS DIRECTORS

March 9, 1973

Dear Sir:

The Track Committee of the Florida Athletic Coaches Association has instructed me to survey the fifty High School Activities Associations to determine the Limitation of Individual Participation practiced by each state.

Briefly, the Florida rule states that:

"1. No contestant shall enter more than five events, only three of which may be running events.

2. No contestant may run in more than two events of 220 yards or more."

Would you please take a few minutes from your busy schedule to complete the enclosed survey. A self addressed, stamped envelope has been provided.

Please feel free to comment on any of the questions or philosophy underlying your rule. If you care to enclose a copy of your regulations pertaining to limitations of individual participation, we would be happy to receive same.

Sincerely,

KIRBY STEWART, Ed. D.
Assistant Professor of Education
Assistant Director for Curriculum Research
P. K. Yonge Laboratory School

KS/hd
Enclosure

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Appendix II

SURVEY OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL BOYS
INTERSCHOLASTIC TRACK PROGRAM

1. In how many events may a contestant participate? _____
   Running events (including relays) _____
   Field events _____

2. Are there limitations relative to distance of the track events (as shown in the example of the rule in Florida)? Yes_____ No_____
   If yes, explain briefly _____
   _____
   _____

3. How many relay events are included in State Competition? _____

4. What relays do you run in State Competition? Check Please

440 Relay	_____
880 Relay	_____
Mile Relay	_____
Two Mile Relay	_____
Sprint Medley (' ' ') Distance by legs	_____
Mid Medley (' ' ') Distance by legs	_____
Distance Medley (' ' ') Distance by legs	_____
Other	_____